

DGS EMPLOYEES OF THE WEEK: ANSWERING THE CALL

Cathy Marzola, Cheryl McEwen & Chanel Wilcox

Their work is done behind-the-scenes, but they play a vital role in helping vendors take advantage of business opportunities with the State, as well as local governments. Cathy Marzola and Cheryl McEwen, along with Chanel Wilcox as backup, respond to hundreds of phone calls and emails received by the Office of Business Program's Help Desk each month. Despite the fact that some phone calls can take several hours, Cathy, Cheryl and Chanel are always professional, patient and prompt with their responses. For consistently Doing Great Service, they are our Employees of the Week.



(left to right) Chanel Wilcox, Cheryl McEwen and Cathy Marzola

"Cathy, Cheryl and Chanel are truly the unsung heroes at DGS," said Jorge I. Austrich, Director of Business Programs. "Day in and day out they staff the department's Help Desk assisting Maryland businesses and entrepreneurs with their questions regarding eMaryland Marketplace and the Small Business Reserve Program. Cathy and Cheryl are the primary staff of our call center with Chanel providing back up as necessary. Together they answer over 4,000 inquiries each year."

Chanel is the newest member of the team, having worked at DGS since 2008. Cathy joined DGS in 1997 and Cheryl in 1998. The two of them have shared an office at 301 West Preston Street ever since. Their office is a home away from home, filled with family photos and mementos, including a book of thank you notes sent to Cathy, Cheryl and Chanel from grateful customers.

The trio says the most frequent problem they respond to are vendors who have forgotten their login information and passwords. Those are the easy calls. Cathy says it's not unusual to be on the phone for two hours when a customer is starting from square one. She remembers when the owner of a small business located in Deep Creek Lake called for help in registering for eMaryland Marketplace. The call went on so long that Cathy took a break for lunch and then called the woman back to continue answering questions. Cathy says she, Cheryl and Chanel stay on the phone for as long as it takes.

Sometimes the phone isn't enough. Cheryl has a vendor who calls to make an appointment every time he needs to submit a bid. When he shows up at her office, Cheryl patiently walks him through the process on her computer. Cathy, Cheryl and Chanel say it's all in a day's work and they are happy to assist.

When not fielding Help Desk calls, Cheryl cares for her four children ages 18, 13, 11 and 23 months, and also manages to squeeze in shuffleboard on Thursday nights at the American Legion. Cathy has two sons ages 31 and 27. Her younger son just graduated from Towson University. She is a member of the Maiden Choice Motorcycle Club and enjoys helping the club raise money for Casey Cares, an organization that helps pediatric cancer patients. Chanel has three kids ages 24, 23, and 11. She enjoys skating and bowling with her youngest child.

For delivering outstanding customer service the DGS Way, DGS congratulates Cathy Marzola, Cheryl McEwen and Chanel Wilcox.